

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LOME 00043 061218Z
ACTION CU-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 USIA-06 /022 W
-----084179 061219Z /10

R 061000Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY LOME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3344

C O N F I D E N T I A L L O M E 0043

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: OEXC SHUM TO
SUBJ: FY78 NOMINEE: TOULASSI KODJO N'SOUKPOE

REF: STATE 1633

1. EMBASSY WELCOMES OPPORTUNITY TO JUSTIFY GRANT TO GOT
POLICE OFFICIAL, MR TOULASSI KODJO N'SOUKPOE, IN HUMAN
RIGHTS FRAME OF REFERENCE.

2. AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF SURETE NATIONALE(AND ACTING
DEPUTY DIRECTOR), N'SOUKPOE IS PRECISELY THE TYPE OF YOUNG,
BRIGHT, BROAD-GUAGED, POLITICALLY SENSITIVE POLICE OFFICIAL
WHO CAN CONTRIBUTE DIRECTLY TO BETTER RIGHTS PRACTICES AT
THAT NITTY-GRITTY POINT WHEN PERSONS WANTED FOR POLITICAL
OR OTHER REASONS ARE ARRESTED AND INTERROGATED.

3. SURETE NATIONALE HAS EXCELLENT RECORD WITH REGARD TO
HANDLING OF ARRESTEES. PRIOR TO MARCH 1976 WHEN N'SOUKPOE
BECAME SECRETARY GENERAL, HE HEADED THE GENERAL INTELLIGENCE
AND TERRITORIAL SURVEILLANCE DIVISION WHICH TOGETHER
CONSTITUTE THE SPECIAL SERVICES UNIT OF THE SURETE
NATIONALE. THE GROUP PRESENTLY NUMBERS ONLY 36 PERSONS
AND HAS TWO FUNCTIONS: PROTECTING THE STATE FROM INTERNAL
AND EXTERNAL SUBVERSION AND SERVING AS AN ALERTING
MECHANISM FOR INFORMING THE PRESIDENT OF THE BUILD-UP
OF POPULAR GRIEVANCES. IN THE PERIOD N'SOUKPOE HEADED THE
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SPECIAL SERVICES, THERE WAS REPORTEDLY LITTLE ABUSE OF
POLITICAL OR CIVIL LIBERTIES. MOREOVER, DESPITE THE FACT
THAT THE UNIT WAS AUTHORIZED TO MAKE ARRESTS ON POLITICAL
GROUNDS (FOR SUBVERSION), SUCH ARRESTS WERE RARE.

4. AFTER N'SOUKPOE BECAME SECRETARY GENERAL IN 1976,
HIS OFFICE REITERATED INSTRUCTIONS THAT ARRESTS BE

ACCOMPLISHED WITHOUT UNNECESSARY FORCE AND INTERROGATIONS BE CONDUCTED WITHOUT PHYSICAL VIOLENCE. IN LAST YEAR'S INCIDENT INVOLVING THE ARREST OF 12 MEMBERS OF THE TOGOLESE MARXIST ALLIANCE (THEY WERE EVENTUALLY PARDONED BY PRESIDENT EYADEMA, SEE 77 LOME 2731), NO VIOLENCE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN USED IN INTERROGATION ACCORDING TO EMBASSY CONTACTS WITH SOME OF THE RELEASED PRISONERS.

5. ALTHOUGH UNDER 40, N'SOUKPOE IS ALREADY ACTING DEPUTY SURETE DIRECTOR AS WELL AS SECRETARY GENERAL. WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED TO SEE HIM AS SURETE DIRECTOR WITHIN A FEW YEARS. HIS POTENTIAL DOES NOT STOP THERE. HE BELONGS TO A SMALL CORPS OF POLICE COMMISSAIRES ABOUT 20 IN ALL, TWO OF WHOM ARE NOW MEMBERS OF THE COUNTRY'S TOP POLITICAL BODY, THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE RPT. COMMISSAIRES HAVE ALSO BEEN CHOSEN TO SERVE AS MINISTERS. AS ONE OF THE BRIGHTEST OF THIS SELECT GROUP, WE BELIEVE THAT N'SOUKPOE'S LONGTERM POTENTIAL IS OBVIOUSLY NOT LIMITED TO POLICE WORK.

6. WE UNDERSTAND HE IS WELL REGARDED BY PRESIDENT EYADEMA AND BELIEVE HIS SELECTION AS AN IV GRANTEE WILL BE CORRECTLY INTERPRETED AS ANOTHER LOW-KEY SIGN OF US WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE WITH TOGO IN ITS HANDLING OF ITS SECURITY CONCERNS. OUR DEMONSTRATED WILLINGNESS TO DO SO IN THE RECNET CASE OF THE THWARTED MERCENARY ATTACK HAS BEEN A MAJOR BOOST TO US-TOGOLESE RELATIONS.
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UM FINALLY, N'SOUKPOE IS IN A POSITION TO BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL TO THE EMBASSY IN A RANGE OF MATTERS FROM VISA PROBLEMS AND THE HANDLING OF AMERICANS WHO RUN AFOUL OF TOGOLESE LAW TO COOPERATION AGAINST TERRORIST THREATS.

8. IN SHORT, FROM ALL POINTS OF VIEW HE IS AN EXCELLENT CANDIDATE. PALMER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LOME00043
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780010-0377
Format: TEL
From: LOME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780192/aaaaczvi.tel
Line Count: 102
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 419701e6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION CU
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 1633
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3818806
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FY78 NOMINEE: TOULASSI KODJO N'SOUKPOE
TAGS: OEXC, SHUM, TO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/419701e6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014